GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:845
ANSWERED ON:21.11.2016
Caste based Discrimination
Chaudhury Shri Jitendra;Hari Shri G.;Kataria Shri Rattan Lal;Tharoor Dr. Shashi

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the Government is aware of concerns being raised regarding caste based discrimination and harassment of teachers and students in universities and educational institutions in the country; and
(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise during the last three years and the current year?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MAHENDRA NATH PANDEY)
(a) & (b): Universities are autonomous bodies which are governed by their own Acts and the Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations made thereunder. The Acts of the respective Universities stipulate that the University shall not discriminate on grounds of caste, religion, etc. The Universities are competent to take all administrative decisions including to prevent all kinds of harassment and discrimination against any section of students.
The Government of India and UGC have issued several instructions to all State Governments and Centrally Funded Educational Institutions to curb discrimination of any kind. Major initiatives undertaken are:-
In order to check discrimination and harassment of any section of students and to strengthen the grievance redressal mechanism, the UGC has formulated the UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2012 and UGC (Grievance Redressal) Regulations, 2012. These Regulations intend to give effect in letter and spirit to the provisions of the Constitution and other statutory provisions and policies for prevention of discrimination on the grounds of caste and to safeguards the interests of the students belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Regulations also seek to provide for advancement of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students through setting up of Equal Opportunity Cells in each Higher Educational Institution. The UGC also provides financial assistance to establish the Centre for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy to support focused research on the issue of social exclusion related to dalits, tribal and religious minorities. In order to make the universities/colleges more responsive to the needs and constraints of the disadvantaged social groups, the UGC is giving financial assistance to all eligible Colleges/Universities to establish Equal Opportunity Centres. The aim and objective of this Scheme is to oversee the effective implementation of policies and programmes for disadvantaged groups, to provide guidance and counselling with respect to academic, financial, social and other matters and to enhance the diversity within the campus. UGC Regulations on Curbing the Menace of Ragging in Higher Educational Institutions, 2009, provides for elimination of ragging in all its form from Universities. The UGC has a nationwide round the clock anti-ragging helpline for receiving and tracking complaints of ragging and for various consequential actions in respect of fresh complaints.
UGC has also approved establishment of 126 SC/ST cells in various Universities with a view to safeguard the interests of SC/ST students.
Other initiatives include provision of Anti Discriminatory faculty advisors for SC/ST students who look into their problems and advise accordingly, appointment of Student Counsellors to address personal, academic, psychological and family related problems, providing sports and extra curricular activities, setting up counselling centres, provision of anxiety helpline, and setting up disciplinary action committee to take urgent action in case of any complaints of reported ragging, discrimination based on caste, creed, religion and gender etc. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has informed that data on caste-based discrimination for the last three years was not maintained however data for the year 2016 is annexed.
A Conference of Vice Chancellors of Central Universities was held on February 18, 2016 wherein all the Vice Chancellors and senior Officers of the Central Universities have been asked to be more vigilant and put a proper system in place including appointment of Anti-Discrimination Officer to ensure that the students from

these categories are not put to any disadvantage or hardship.
*****